



Program Abstract

Title

Rikers Health Advocacy Program (RHAP)

Summary

This program was originally developed for use with incarcerated male adolescent drug users, who may be detained in custody only briefly. The intensive, short-term intervention consists of four one-hour, small-group sessions focusing on health education issues, particularly HIV/AIDS. Using and adapting Problem Solving Therapy techniques, the facilitator leads eight-person groups through discussions about: general health, HIV and AIDS, drug abuse and its consequences, sexual behavior, health and AIDS risk behaviors and strategies for seeking health and social services. The discussions provide opportunities for participants to define high-risk attitudes and behaviors, suggest alternative actions and complete challenging “thought teaser” exercises designed to help the teens reflect on the reasons why they engage in high-risk behaviors.

A field study of the program compared changes in the attitudes and behaviors of *RHAP* participants with those of a comparison group of teens, selected from a waiting list for the program. Both samples were predominantly African-American and Hispanic. Following the intervention, program participants expressed more favorable attitudes toward condoms, and were more likely to use condoms during intercourse, as compared with the comparison group of teens.

Focus

- Primary pregnancy prevention Secondary pregnancy prevention STI/HIV/AIDS prevention

Original Site

- School-based Community-based Clinic-based

*Suitable for Use
In*

RHAP is appropriate for school- or community-based programs serving high-risk teens, especially drug users and incarcerated youth. Although it was initially designed for males, it is possible for the curriculum to be used with females. Single-sex discussion groups are recommended.

Approach

- Abstinence
- Behavioral Skills Development
- Community Outreach
- Contraceptive Access
- Contraceptive Education
- Life Option Enhancement
- Self-Efficacy/Self-Esteem
- Sexuality/HIV/STI Education

Original Intervention Sample

Age, Gender: The original sample included 110 incarcerated, drug-using males, ages 16 to 18 years (avg.=17.8).

Race/ Ethnicity: 64% African-American, 33% Hispanic, 3% White

Program Components

- Adult Involvement
- Case Management
- Group Discussion
- Lectures
- Peer Counseling/Instruction
- Public Service Announcements
- Role Play
- Video
- Other

Program Length

This is a two-week, four hour intervention. Two one-hour group sessions are held each week.

Staffing Requirements/ Training

One leader is required for each group of approximately eight participants. Leaders should be the same sex as the teens in their group; they must also be comfortable working with high-risk youths and must be knowledgeable about HIV and drug use/abuse. For training, a thorough review of the curriculum and strategies for facilitating group sessions is recommended. It is recommended that the facilitator thoroughly review the curriculum and strategies for facilitating a group prior to implementing the program.

Notes about Evaluation

The PASHA program also includes three resources for evaluation: (1) the original questionnaire(s) used by the program developer in demonstrating the effectiveness of this program; (2) the *Prevention Minimum Evaluation Data Set (PMEDS)*, a generic questionnaire that can be adapted to suit most prevention programs; and (3) a *Local Evaluator Consultant Network Directory*. These materials are included as a starting point for evaluating your program, should you choose to do so. Before

The PASHA Field Test (continued)

you use these or any survey instruments with your teens, it is very important that you obtain consent and approval from the appropriate people. Most programs can benefit from outside help in designing and carrying out an evaluation. Your local university may be a good place to look for outside help—or you may refer to the *Local Evaluator Consultant Network Directory*. For further information, call PASHA staff (see Contact Information below).

Contact Information

Program Archive on Sexuality, Health and Adolescence (PASHA)
Sociometrics Corporation
Tel. (650) 383-6268
E-mail: socio@socio.com

Bibliography

D’Zurilla, T.J., (1988). Problem-solving therapies. In: K.S. Dobson, (ed). *Handbook of Cognitive Behavioral Therapies*. NY: Guilford., 85-135.

Magura, S., Kang, S.Y., & Shapiro, J.L., (1994). Outcomes of intensive AIDS education for male adolescent drug users in jail. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 15(6), 457-463.